



# USAID | GUATEMALA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**Subject:** Notice of Funding Opportunity

**Number:** Request for Applications (RFA) 72052021RFA00006  
Amendment No. 1

**Project Title:** Basic Education Quality and Transitions

**Date:** August 2, 2021

This Amendment No. 1 to subject RFA is hereby issued to make some changes to the original RFA and respond to the questions (attached) received in response to this funding opportunity as follows:

1. Page 16 of the RFA, Section A.7 Approach and Illustrative Interventions, Activity Result 3: Delete *“USAID expects the Activity to work with the MOE and other key local stakeholders such as local universities, although they may not be subrecipients to the award, to implement and sustain in-person and remote foundational skills instruction (IR1 of BEQT).”* and substitute with *“USAID expects the Activity to work with the MOE and other key local stakeholders such as local universities to implement and sustain in-person and remote foundational skills instruction (IR1 of BEQT)s”*.
2. Page 22 of the RFA, Section A.8, Other Considerations, Gender: Delete “health services” and substitute with “education services”.
2. Page 28 of the RFA, Section B.3 Start date and Period of Performance for Federal Awards: Delete *“The estimated start date is October 2021.”* and substitute with *“The estimated start date is December 2021.”*
3. Page 30 of the RFA, Section C.1 Eligible Applicants: add the following: Prime applicants must not request exclusive teaming agreements to local partners. Local organizations can participate in more than one Concept Paper with different prime applicants.
4. Page 33 of the RFA, Section D.3 General Content and Form of the Concept Paper and Application, Concept paper submission instructions, second bullet: add the following: “Smaller font size than Time New Roman 12 is acceptable for charts, graphics and tables.”
5. Page 37 of the RFA, Section D.5 Technical Application, first paragraph: add the following: “Smaller font size than Time New Roman 12 is acceptable for charts, graphics and tables.”

6. Page 37 of the RFA, Section D.5 Technical Application: Delete “The total size of each e-mail transmission should not exceed 25 Megabytes” and substitute with “The total size of each e-mail transmission should not exceed 20 Megabytes”.
7. Page 51 of the RFA, Section E.2 Review and Selection Process, b) Business review, third paragraph: delete “if provided”.
8. Page 53 of the RFA, Section F.3 Reporting Requirements, Annual Work plan: Delete “In subsequent years, the recipient must submit the annual work plan by May 1st.” and substitute with “In subsequent years, the recipient must submit the annual work plan by July 31st, subsequent work plans will cover the period October 1 to September 30 of the following year”.
9. Page 59 of the RFA, Section F.3 Reporting Requirements, Annual Performance Report (APR): Delete “October 31” and substitute with “October 30.”.
10. Attachment No. 1 includes the responses to the questions received.

All other terms and conditions of the RFA remain without change and in full force.

Sincerely,

Alina Menicucci  
Agreement Officer

## Basic Education Quality and Transitions Questions and Answers

### Section A – Program Description

1. The RFA states on p. 5 - *The Activity may also seek to identify gaps and further the sustainability of gains made from previous USAID investments in grades 1-3 as in the implementation of Bilingual Intercultural Education Models and reading intervention programs.*  
Question: How much investment is the Activity placing in grades 1-3 which is mentioned a few times in the RFA? Should we be considering a certain percentage?  
**USAID Response: Applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for implementing this intervention.**
2. The RFA states an illustrative *intervention* on p. 17 - *Support the MOE to update the curriculum for foundational reading, writing, math, and SEL skills instruction in grades 4-6 and primero basico for in-person, remote, and hybrid modalities.*  
Question: Is the update to the curriculum expected to be a curriculum reform process?  
**USAID Response: As stated in the Program Description, this is an illustrative intervention. Applicants may determine whether this is an intervention to be pursued, and if so, applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for implementing this intervention.**
3. The RFA states on p. 17 - *Align teaching and learning materials (TLMs) to the updated curriculum for foundational reading, writing, math, and SEL skills in grades 4-6 and primero basico, and support MOE and local governments to deliver copies of the materials to each student in the target areas.*  
Question: Do these materials refer to Teachers' Guides, Student Textbooks and other classroom resources?  
**USAID Response: As stated in the Program Description, this is an illustrative intervention. Applicants may determine whether this is an intervention to be pursued, and if so, applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for implementing this intervention.**
4. Intervention grades in Result 1 (p14-17) - *Reading, writing, math, SEL outcomes for all learners in primary school and primero básico in target areas improved* - The description of this result states that the “focus of this Activity Result is for learners in grades 4-6 and primero básico to improve their reading, writing, math, and social and emotional skills” (p14). The activity will also “seek to address foundational skills gaps that remain in grades 1-3. Specifically for reading and SEL” (p15). However, IR Illustrative Interventions in p17 do not include specific activities in grades 1-3 and most activities relate to grade 4-6.
  - Could you please confirm that math skills cannot be supported in grades 1-3?
  - Could you please confirm that the focus of Result 1 is to improve learning outcomes for all students in primary school?
  - Could you please confirm if foundational skills from 4 grade are expected to only be taught in Spanish?

**USAID Response: As stated in the Program Description, the interventions listed under the Intermediate Results are illustrative. Applicants may determine how Result 1 should be pursued, and therefore, applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for implementing these interventions.**

5. In Program Description, Other Considerations, Cross-cutting principles: Gender, page 22, the RFA states that “the Activity will seek to address the underlying, gender-based constraints to behavior change and demand for and use of health services, working with both sexes and across age groups to increase effectiveness.” Question: Could USAID clarify that BEQT Activity is intended to address the demand for and use of education services rather than the “demand for and use of health services,” or otherwise provide more detail?

**USAID Response: BEQT Activity is intended to address the demand for and use of education services. This will be corrected in the RFA.**

6. In Program Description, Other Considerations, Cross-cutting principles: Behavior Change Communication, page 25-26, the RFA refers to both Behavior Change Communication (BCC) and Social and Behavioral Change Communication (SBCC). “USAID seeks to include Behavior Change Communication (BCC) as a strategy....” “SBCC employs communications strategies...” Question: Could USAID please confirm the terms BCC and SBCC are meant to be used interchangeably, or otherwise provide more detail?

**USAID Response: The terms BCC and SBCC are used interchangeably in the RFA.**

7. In Program Description, Other Considerations, Cross-cutting principles: COVID-19 Considerations, page 27, the RFA states “promot[ing] synergies in achieving health and nutrition outcomes, but also limiting risks of spreading the disease both in health providers as in the general population” and to the “COVID-19 clinical picture in children and pregnant women.” Question: Could USAID clarify that Applicants are not expected to work with health providers or seek to achieve health and nutrition outcomes, but instead this section was intended to reflect USAID’s desire to promote synergies in education outcomes and limit the risk of spreading COVID-19 to education providers, or otherwise provide more detail?

**USAID Response: The latter, the Activity is intended to reflect USAID’s desire to promote synergies in education outcomes and limit the risk of spreading COVID-19 to education providers and other beneficiaries.**

8. Page 5 indicates that “the Activity will work with USAID and the MOE to select up to three municipalities in each of the departments”. Does USAID expect the project to work with all the schools in the schools and communities within a selected municipality?

**USAID Response: The municipalities should be selected in accordance with Section 2. Place of Performance. Applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for implementing this intervention and therefore, come up with an informed selection of what a target area should constitute to obtain the proposed results in the PD.**

9. Place of Performance (p5) - The NOFO states that the “Activity will work with USAID and the MOE to select up to three municipalities in each of the departments described above”. Could you please confirm whether the target municipalities will be selected after the award is made?

**USAID Response: The municipalities should be selected in accordance with Section 2. Place of Performance. Applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for implementing this intervention and therefore, come up with an informed selection of what a target area should constitute to obtain the proposed results in the PD.**

10. Will USAID indicate which municipalities to work in each department or will the organization identify you with the diagnosis?

**USAID Response: The municipalities should be selected in accordance with Section 2. Place of Performance. Applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for implementing this intervention and therefore, come up with an informed selection of what a target area should constitute to obtain the proposed results in the PD**

11. Will the municipalities be defined in conjunction with the Ministry of Education or another entity? For example, if the theory of change assumes that by improving the intervention in primary school there will be greater participation in the basic, the municipalities with the greatest supply of basic installed should be considered or the project would develop the capacity of the Ministry of Education to create new educational centers of that level with quality

**USAID Response: The municipalities should be selected in accordance with Section 2. Place of Performance. Applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for implementing this intervention and therefore, come up with an informed selection of what a target area should constitute to obtain the proposed results in the PD**

12. Does the definition of the municipalities in which intervention is to be taken have some pre-established criteria or will they be established in conjunction with the Ministry of Education?

**USAID Response: The municipalities should be selected in accordance with Section 2. Place of Performance. Applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for implementing this intervention and therefore, come up with an informed selection of what a target area should constitute to obtain the proposed results in the PD**

13. Would USAID please share the project reports from the Lifelong Learning and Education Reform in the Classroom activities as soon as possible? We were unable to locate them at [dec.usaid.gov](http://dec.usaid.gov).

**USAID Response: Please, refer to [dec.usaid.gov](http://dec.usaid.gov). In addition, you can visit the project's website: <http://www.usaidlea.org/> or access the following link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1M4bbtZTFdwszO3nku8QlyPKAvRIBWKDt>**

14. After searching through the USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) we were unable to find the latest quarterly and annual reports as well as teaching and learning materials developed under current USAID activities in Guatemala. Please provide links to where those documents can be found. (Juarez quarterly and annual reports)

**USAID Response: Please, refer to [dec.usaid.gov](http://dec.usaid.gov). In addition, you can visit the project's website: <http://www.usaidlea.org/> or access the following link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1M4bbtZTFdwszO3nku8QlyPKAvRIBWKDt>**

15. On page 17 of the RFA, USAID states, the expected implementer will “support the MOE to develop benchmarks/standards and targets for reading, math, and SEL outcomes aligned to internationally recognized standards such as the GPF and CASEL’s SEL Framework.” Would USAID please clarify whether this support is intended for Grades 4-6 only or also for Grades 1-3?

**USAID Response: Please refer to section 6. Desired Results specifically Result. 1  
Applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for obtaining the best results.**

16. On pages 19-20 of the RFA, USAID states, “With distance materials for early grade reading materials developed through Lifelong Learning, BEQT could potentially support the use of these materials and the incorporation of distance learning as a flexible modality for early primary learners; strengthening a bilingual model which in grades 1-3 promotes reading in their own language and helping with the transferring of skills in the bilingual model in the higher grades of primary.” However, on page 15, USAID states, “BEQT support at the early primary grades may entail supporting assessments and monitoring implementation at those grade levels and providing recommendations to the GOG, local institutions, and other donors” – a potentially more limited scope. Would USAID please clarify its expectations for interventions in Grades 1-3?

**USAID Response: As stated in the PD on pg. 1, “The primary beneficiaries of this Activity are students in grades 4-6...The activity may also seek to identify gaps and further the sustainability of gains made from previous USAID investments in grades 1-3.” Applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for obtaining the best results aligned to the purpose and desired results in the PD and taking into consideration the learning crisis that COVID-19 has exacerbated.**

17. Partnership with local universities - USAID Guatemala has been partnering with local universities for decades to improve quality education in rural areas across the country. In addition, partnerships with local partners are encouraged throughout the NOFO, and the work with local universities is referenced continuously (e.g. “Partner with local universities to improve pre-service training for teachers” p18). However, the NOFO clearly states that “local universities...may not be subrecipients to the award” (p16). Could you please confirm whether local universities are indeed barred from any kind of subaward in this application process?

**USAID Response: Universities are not barred from subawards. The PD will be edited to remove the portion of text that says “although they may not be subrecipients to the award.”**

18. IR2 Illustrative Interventions - The NOFO states that “BEQT will seek to link to the health and other sector activities where possible to provide access to WASH facilities in schools to improve access, especially for girls” (p19). But p.47 states that “Construction will not be authorized under this award”. Could you please confirm whether USAID will/won’t allow construction of WASH -or other-facilities under this Activity?

**USAID Response: This Activity does not contemplate construction. The Activity anticipates creating synergies with other projects and local efforts that are improving learning conditions for students (e.g. WASH facilities) in the target areas.**

19. The RFA says on page 19: BEQT will seek to link to the health and other sector activities where possible to provide access to WASH facilities in schools to improve access, especially for girls. Question: Would some of the budget be allowed for the project to actually build WASH facilities in schools to facilitate girls’ access to education? Or the guidance is that the activity only links BEQT to other health/wash activities.

**USAID Response: Please see answer to question 18.**

20. Advisory Committee (p- 22 and 28-29) - An Advisory committee is mentioned in the document although there are no references to potential members. Could USAID confirm whether this Committee will be organized post-award, following the inventory of organizations?

**USAID Response: Applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for implementing this intervention. The Advisory Committee may be organized after the award is signed.**

21. Climate Risk Management (p24) - The NOFO makes multiple references to other sectors such as “sustainable Forest Management outcomes”, risk of fire and fire management, pest outbreaks, reforestation, etc. Could USAID confirm that these sectors will not require proposed solutions under this Activity?

**USAID Response: Please refer to Section 6. Desired Results to identify the desired results required from this Activity. As stated in the final sentence in the Climate Risk Management section, “The prime implementing partner shall consider the identified climate risks when proposing interventions and explain how they will account for these risks.”**

22. Page 19: “To address the limited number of seats in lower secondary, BEQT will explore options for opening up more seats, implementing flexible distance learning modalities within RFAthe school system, such as through radio, and subsidizing costs for those living more than five kilometers away from the nearest secondary school.” Currently only students ages 15+ are permitted to participate in alternative forms of basico. Is the Activity expected to work with the MOE to alter that policy, or are flexible distance interventions intended as complementary to traditional forms of basico?

**USAID Response: As stated in the Program Description, this is an illustrative intervention. Applicants may determine whether this is an intervention to be pursued, and if so, applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for implementing this intervention.**

23. Page 19: “Students have unique codes that can be used to track their progress in the system”. Does USAID have any specific recommendations or additional details associated with these codes to track progress?

**USAID Response: As stated in the Program Description, this is an illustrative intervention. Applicants may determine whether this is an intervention to be pursued, and if so, applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for implementing this intervention.**

24. IR 2 focuses on school management, but there is no mention of SINAE. The SINAE modality is only partially implemented to date. Is there a preferred mechanism for training and teacher support or is that TBD with MOE Directorates?

**USAID Response: Please refer to RFA’s page 9 to the section “Relationship to GOG Policies and Priorities.”**

25. Page 28: “Evaluations will be conducted by implementing partner”. Will USAID applicants need to set aside funds or will USAID pay for external mid-term and final evaluations?

**USAID Response: Please refer to 2. Expected Performance Indicators, Targets, Baseline Data, and Data Collection page 28.**



26. Does USAID/Guatemala have an established relationship with a Guatemalan University or Universities that the awardee is expected to work closely with to implement related activities in the RFA, or are applicants expected to establish University relationships to implement the activities listed BEQT?

**USAID Response: Applicants may determine whether this is an intervention to be pursued, and if so, applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for implementing this intervention.**

27. The RFA state, “USAID expects the Activity to work with the MOE and other key local stakeholders such as local universities, although they may not be subrecipients to the award (p.16).” Many of the illustrated activities feature partnerships with universities. Please provide further guidance on if local universities can be (non-transitional) subrecipients, either through granting or contracting mechanisms.

**USAID Response: Please see response to question 17.**

28. Why does USAID request for IR2 automatic enrollment policy (p. 18)?

**USAID Response: As stated in the Program Description, this is an illustrative intervention. Applicants may determine whether this is an intervention to be pursued, and if so, applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for implementing this intervention.**

29. Please provide further information about the IR3 Illustrative Intervention, “Community members participate in certified coaching programs and PSS designed by local universities to increase academic and social and emotional support to students (p. 20).” Which programs was USAID referring to in this activity?

**USAID Response: As stated in the Program Description, this is an illustrative intervention. Applicants may determine whether this is an intervention to be pursued, and if so, applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for implementing this intervention.**

30. Can USAID clarify whether the program is intended to work with just children within the typical age range for grades 4-6 and primero básico, or does USAID also anticipate targeting Guatemalans who dropped out of school for a while and are returning to formal education at a later age?

**USAID Response: The primary beneficiaries of this Activity are students in grades 4-6 and primero básico.**

31. In Program Description, Other Considerations, Cross-cutting principles: Indigenous Engagement, Community Ownership and Inclusion, page 22, states that “The organization will engage with indigenous peoples through existing networks and as members of the Advisory Committee to prioritize activities according to indigenous people’s needs and preferred approaches.” However, under the description of USAID Substantial Involvement, pages 28-29, the RFA states “the Recipient will work with USAID Guatemala to establish an advisory committee for the Activity per ADS 303.3.11.c.(1). The AOR will participate in meetings with the proposed advisory committee to deal with programmatic and technical matters such as reviewing the strategy and



providing feedback on adapting activities.” Questions: Could USAID clarify if the Advisory Committee reference on page 22 is the same Advisory Committee referenced on page 28-29? If this is not the case, can USAID please clarify if Applicants are expected to establish an Advisory Committee only for indigenous groups or two advisory committees, one for indigenous groups and another for programmatic and technical matters?

**USAID Response: Applicants may propose advisory committees for programmatic and technical matters.**

32. The different results include the "illustrative interventions", are these activities mandatory or are they suggestions to include them in the proposal?

**USAID Response: As stated in the Program Description, an illustrative intervention seems to be presented as a possible action to consider. Applicants may determine whether these are interventions to be pursued, and if so, applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for implementing these interventions.**

33. The country has scheduled a change of government for January 2024 Is it possible to make adjustments to the intervention when the new government is in office?, How sensitive can the changes be?

**USAID Response: Applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches if changes need to be considered once the new government is established. Applicants should consider the Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting section of the PD on pages 26-27.**

34. In numeral 2 they mention the departments identified, Baja Verapaz, Huehuetenango, Quiché and San Marcos, are these only those in which intervention will be taken or will those that are in table no. 1 of reference on page 7 be included?

**USAID Response: The target departments are Baja Verapaz, Huehuetenango, Quiché and San Marcos.**

35. Are applicants supposed to put funding from this project (from the \$30m) for the local partner to implement the two activities in Years 4&5 or is USAID going to provide additional funding as a direct grant to the local partner?

**USAID Response: Applicants should budget sufficient funds to meet the objectives of the PD based on their proposed approach. USAID may award a transition award to the local organization(s) potentially during or after year 4; USAID will coordinate any transition of activities with the recipient.**

36. Please provide further guidance to which project activities/results USAID expects to be transitioned to the MOE and which activities/results to transition organizations.

**USAID Response: Please refer to Activity Result 3 starting on page 16 of the PD. Applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for transitioning intervention(s). USAID will coordinate with the recipient any activities to be potentially transitioned.**

37. USAID guidance on activity capacity building balance between MOE and Transition partner (or something about how they prefer this to be managed in process and content?)

**USAID Response: Applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for implementing this intervention.**

38. Does USAID preference for consortium or a single transition partner?

**USAID Response: There is no preference, this depends on the approach proposed by the applicant.**

39. Page 16 states that “BEQT is planned to be an initial award with a follow-on transition award in accordance with ADS 303mbb”. Per ADS 303, page 98, one condition to be eligible for a transition award is that “the recipient of the transition award is a local subrecipient that has not previously received a direct award from USAID”. Would USAID please confirm that organizations that have received USAID funds through a subaward, but not a direct award are eligible?

**USAID Response: Yes, organizations that have not received direct awards (and meet the other ADS 303mbb requirements for a transition award) are eligible.**

40. Is there any limitation to the type of organization that can be proposed for the transition award? Or NGOs, CSOs, grass-root organizations equally eligible if they meet the technical/administrative explicit criteria that will be defined with USAID according to page 16?

**USAID Response: No, as long as they meet the definition of local organization included in section H.5.**

41. Does USAID expect the prime awardee to continue managing and providing technical support to the local subrecipient once the transition award takes place, or will USAID manage the relationship with the local subrecipient directly?

**USAID Response: USAID may award a transition award to the local organization(s) and have a direct relationship with this organization.**

42. On page 16 of the RFA, USAID states, “BEQT is planned to be an initial award with a follow-on transition award in accordance with ADS 303mbb” and “by the end of year 3 of the Activity, the prime implementing partner will inform USAID of the potential suitability of the transition award to local subrecipient(s), according to the established criteria.” Given BEQT is a 5-year activity, when does USAID anticipate issuing the follow-on transition award, i.e., if USAID deems a local sub-recipient meets the suitability criteria at or near the end of year 3, could they receive a USAID transition award before the end of BEQT and thus be unavailable to complete a full five years on BEQT as a sub-recipient?

**USAID Response: USAID may award a transition award to the local organization(s) potentially during or after year 4, USAID will coordinate any transition of activities with the recipient.**

43. Transition award - The NOFO states that “By the end of year 3, the prime implementing partner will inform USAID of the potential suitability of the transition award” (p16). Could you please confirm at which point during the life of the program, the transition award is expected to be made?

**USAID Response: Potentially during or after year 4.**

44. Re: p. 16 of the RFA, after the recommendation made by the Prime implementing partner to USAID by the end of Year 3, could USAID give more details on the steps and timeframe for a Transition Award to be granted, e.g. perform NUPAS, application and awarding process.

**USAID Response: USAID may award a transition award to the local organization(s) potentially during or after year 4; USAID will coordinate any transition of activities with the recipient and will follow the process described in <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303mbb.pdf>.**

45. When should we anticipate USAID awarding a Transition Award of BEQT?

**USAID Response: USAID may award a transition award to the local organization(s) potentially during or after year 4.**

46. Given that the objective is for the Transition Award recipient to implement and sustain IR2 and IR3, what is the expectation for activities of these areas from year 4 (or from the award of a Transition Award) in the original BEQT award?

**USAID Response: USAID may award a transition award to the local organization(s) potentially during the year 4, USAID will coordinate any transition of activities with the recipient. Applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for interventions in each year of BEQT.**

## **Section C – Eligibility Information**

47. We want to know if the Guatemala USAID Educational grant is restricted to Guatemala educational system or other countries too can apply.

**USAID Response: Eligibility for this NOFO is not restricted. All qualified U.S. and non-U.S. organizations (other than those from foreign policy restricted countries) are eligible to apply.**

**Proposed activities must be specifically for Guatemala in the target areas outlined in the RFA.**

48. Profit organizations qualify to apply?

**USAID Response: Eligibility for this NOFO is not restricted. All qualified U.S. and non-U.S. organizations (other than those from foreign policy restricted countries) are eligible to apply.**

**Pursuant to Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 200.400(g), it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments such as Cooperative Agreements, and as such, for-profit organizations must waive profits and/or fees to be eligible to submit an application. Forgone profit does not qualify as cost-share or leverage.**

49. There are limited local partners available that work within the space outlined in the RFA and many of these local organizations are currently working with implementing partners on USAID activities. In the fairness of competition (FGCA of 1977), we respectfully request that USAID

require that applicants not have exclusive teaming agreements with local partners, including transition subrecipients.

**USAID Response: Prime applicants must not request exclusive teaming agreements to local partners. Local organizations can participate in more than one Concept Paper with different prime applicants.**

50. Section C (2): Eligibility Information, Cost Sharing or Matching, page 30, states “USAID has established a cost share minimum of ten (10) percent for the award.” However, on page 51 Section b) Business Review, page 51, the RFA states “proposed cost share, if provided, will be reviewed for compliance....” **Question:** Could USAID confirm that 10% cost share is required of all applicants?

**USAID Response: As indicated in Section C.2, USAID has established a required cost share of 10%.**

51. Leverage and Cost Share - Resource leverage is mentioned in p.9 and p.30, could you please confirm that the 10% mandatory cost share is not leverage?

**USAID Response: As indicated in Section C.2, USAID has established a required cost share of 10%. No leverage is required.**

52. **Cost Share (p)30** - Could you please inform whether the 10% cost sharing requirement is needed for for-profit companies? If so, is there any possibility to lower this amount?

**USAID Response: As indicated in Section C.2, USAID has established a required cost share of 10% for all applicants.**

## **Section D – Application and Submission Information**

53. Are we allowed to send annexes together with the 5-page concept note?

**USAID Response: No. Concept papers must not exceed seven (7) pages including the cover page and cost summary. Applicants are advised that any pages exceeding the limit of seven pages will not be considered for evaluation.**

54. In the section, Concept Paper Submission Instructions, page 33, the RFA states “Concept papers must not exceed seven (7) pages. Concept papers must be written in English and typed on standard 8 1/2” x 11” paper, single spaced, Times New Roman size 12 font, one inch margins on all sides. Question: Will USAID consider allowing Times New Roman or other size 10 fonts for tables, charts, and graphs?

**USAID Response: Smaller font size than Time New Roman 12 is acceptable for charts, graphics and tables.**

55. Could USAID kindly confirm if a smaller size font than Times New Roman size 12 is acceptable for tables and graphics?

**USAID Response: Smaller font size than Time New Roman 12 is acceptable for charts, graphics and tables.**

56. For both the concept note and the full application, would USAID kindly consider allowing smaller type, e.g., 10 pt, and a different font, e.g., Calibri, for text boxes, illustrations, charts and other graphics?

**USAID Response: Smaller font size than Time New Roman 12 is acceptable for charts, graphics and tables.**

57. Will USAID allow for the use of a different font and smaller font size than Times New Roman 12pt for tables, graphics, and text boxes that is still clearly legible?

**USAID Response: Smaller font size than Time New Roman 12 is acceptable for charts, graphics and tables.**

58. Can USAID clarify if we can use a smaller font size than 12 pt. font for graphics, tables, and charts?

**USAID Response: Smaller font size than Time New Roman 12 is acceptable for charts, graphics and tables.**

59. Could USAID please confirm that the Summary Budget submitted in Phase I may change, as more details are included for Phase II, especially as related to subaward costs, which may vary based on results of pre-award assessments, and Organizational Capacity Assessments?

**USAID Response: Yes, this summary budget may change based on the Applicant's proposed technical approach.**

60. In the section, Concept Paper Contents, page 33, the RFA states "Applicants must also provide a preliminary theory of change that is responsive to the needs, barriers, and opportunities identified and leads to the Intermediate Results and Activity Results outlined in the PD" Question: Can USAID clarify that it wants Applicants to develop their own Theory of Change or should Applicants use the TOC provided in the RFA?

**USAID Response: Applicants are required to develop and submit a Theory of Change based on their proposed technical approach and responding to the RFA requirements.**

61. In the section, Application Submission Procedures/Technical Application, page 36, the RFA states "files size limited to 20 MB" however page 37 indicates "file size 25 MB". Question: Could USAID please clarify the file size limits for proposal application submission?

**USAID Response: Files must not exceed 20 MB. The information included in page 37 is being corrected.**

62. Phase 2- Full Application- Full Application Submission Instructions. Question: Could USAID provide an estimated timeline between issuing invitations to submit full applications and when the Full Application will be due?

**USAID Response: USAID expects to request full applications by the end of the FY 2021.**

63. In the section, Phase 1 – Concept Paper - Technical Approach, page 33, the RFA states, "A summary of previous work and experience in managing similar programs must also be included

(previous USAID experience is not required).” Question: Could USAID please clarify if summary of previous work is limited to the prime applicant, or if it must also include experience of proposed sub-awardees? Question: In addition, please clarify whether programs cited in the Concept Paper must match past performance references to be included in the Full Technical Application.

**USAID Response: This information is required for the prime applicant. The required past performance information for the full applications is listed in pages 40 and 46 of the RFA.**

64. In the section, Performance History, page 40, the RFA states “The section must include a list with the Applicant’s (maximum of five) most relevant contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs”, while in section History of Performance, page 46, the RFA states “The applicant must provide information regarding its recent history of performance for all its cost-reimbursement contracts, grants or cooperative agreement involving similar or related programs, not to exceed five years....” Question: Could USAID please confirm the maximum of five Performance History contracts, grants or cooperative agreements the Applicant should submit under the Full Application?

**USAID Response: Please follow the guidelines listed in pages 40 and 46 of the RFA.**

65. In the section, History of performance, page 46, the RFA states “ The applicant must provide information regarding its recent history of performance for all its cost- reimbursement contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs, not to exceed five years”. Question: Currently, these instructions are in the Business (Cost) Application section. Can USAID confirm that this should be an annex to the Full Technical Application and not the Business (Cost) Application?

**USAID Response: As indicated in the RFA, this information should be submitted as part of the cost application. The technical application should include the information listed in page 40.**

66. On page 33 of the RFA, USAID states, “a summary of previous work and experience in managing similar programs must also be included,” and on page 49, USAID states, “concept papers will be evaluated using the following three selection criteria: 1. Technical approach; 2. Partnerships, (and) 3. Past experience.” Furthermore, on page 40, under “Phase 2 – Full Application,” USAID states, “The applicant must submit Performance History information,” including, “records of relevant previous performance...,” while on page 50, USAID states, “Applications will be reviewed and evaluated in accordance with the following criteria... Criterion 1 Technical Approach (and) Criterion 2 Management and Staffing Plan.” No mention is made of past experience in the description of either criterion for the full application, except for sub-awardees’ organizational capacity and expertise. Would USAID please clarify at what point they will evaluate applicants’ full past experience?

**USAID Response: As indicated in the RFA, past performance is one of the criteria that will be used to select the concept papers. USAID will use the past performance information from the full application for the Pre-Award Risk Assessment per ADS 303.3.9.**

67. In the section, Phase 2- Full Application 6.Oral Presentations , page 40, the RFA states that “Applicants invited to participate in the oral presentation must make arrangements with

USAID/Guatemala to develop a virtual presentation or if COVID-19 regulations permit it must appear in person at USAID/Guatemala”. Question: Could USAID provide Applicants with a timeline for the Full Applications, Oral Presentation and template and instructions for a MS PowerPoint slide deck?

**USAID Response: Oral presentations are expected to be scheduled at the beginning of FY 2022. Each applicant should develop their own MS Power Point slide deck based on the guidelines included in the RFA.**

68. Question: Can USAID confirm that the Full Application due date does not coincide with the delivery of the Oral Presentation?

**USAID Response: Full applications will be submitted before the oral presentations.**

69. Question: Can USAID confirm that all Applicants who are invited to the Full Application will also be invited to the Oral Presentations?

**USAID Response: yes, all applicants who are invited to the full applications will also be invited to the oral presentations.**

70. In the section, 6. Oral Presentations, page 40, the RFA states “The maximum number of oral presentation participants from each applicant is four from the Prime applicant and one from each major sub-awardee (defined as any sub-awardee expected to perform 20% or more of the work described in the PD). A maximum of five persons will be allowed to formally participate in the oral presentation” Question: This language could indicate that four presenters are allowed from the Prime and one from each major sub-awardee, however it also indicates that a maximum of five person will be allowed to formally participate. Can USAID confirm that between both prime and sub-awardee participants the maximum number of presenters for the oral presentation is five?

**USAID Response: A maximum of five persons will be allowed to formally participate in the oral presentations, each applicant must decide the composition of their teams. Four participants from the prime applicant is the maximum permitted, could be less.**

71. In the section, 6. Oral Presentation, page 40, the RFA states “ Applicants invited to participate in the oral presentation must make arrangements with USAID/Guatemala to develop a virtual presentation or if COVID-19 regulations permit it must appear in person at USAID/Guatemala”. Question: Can USAID confirm which COVID-19 regulations it will follow (e.g. Government of Guatemala or USG, other)?

**USAID Response: Government of Guatemala and USG.**

72. Key Personnel, page 38, indicates “the application must present in an annex CVs that detail experience, education, and qualifications of each Key Personnel”. When Applicants submit the Full Application, can USAID please confirm a page length for Key Personnel CVs?

**USAID Response: No page limit is specified for the CVs.**

73. We understand that only those applicants who are invited will be required to deliver an oral presentation. Could USAID please confirm the language expectations for potential oral presentations?



## **USAID Response: English**

74. Can USAID kindly provide a copy of the local compensation plan?

**USAID Response: Salaries should be proposed based on the market value costs and applicant's HR policies.**

75. In order to propose salaries that are comparable with USAID's salaries, would USAID kindly provide its local compensation plan for CCN staff?

**USAID Response: Salaries should be proposed based on the market value costs and applicant's HR policies.**

76. On page 26 of the RFA, USAID states "It is anticipated that the Project Director role, perhaps in combination with other duties, will require full-time or near full-time attention, 90 to 100 percent level of effort." Can USAID confirm if the "Project Director" is the same as the "Chief of Party"?

**USAID Response: Yes, it refers to the Chief of Party**

77. Key personnel (p38-39) - The NOFO lists 5 potential key personnel positions, one of which is the Chief of Party and the rest are "To be determined". Is USAID planning to name additional key personnel positions during the selection process?

**USAID Response: No, as indicated in the RFA, the additional four key personnel must be proposed by each applicant.**

78. For the concept note stage, does USAID expect applicants to include the 5 titles of the Key Personnel (COP plus the four) and the actual names of the selected candidates?

**USAID Response: As indicated in the RFA, this information is required for the full application.**

79. The guidance for partnerships in the Technical Approach description (p. 33) states "A strong concept paper will also include a partnerships strategy or plan that incorporates key local partners and alliances. The criteria for concept note evaluation simply states, "Partnerships". Please provide guidance on the concept note criteria for partnerships. At the concept note stage, will USAID be evaluating the organizations in a consortium, or will they evaluate based on the strategy as mentioned in the approach guidance. Does this also include any transition subrecipient.

**USAID Response: This will depend on the proposed approach of each applicant.**

80. Should the Concept Note Summary budget follow the Full Application Summary Budget instructions found on p 42 of the RFA?

**USAID Response: No, concept papers must include only an estimated cost summary as indicated in page 34.**

81. The summary budget for the concept notes outlines the information that is needed for Sub-Awards including the names of the sub-award organization. If the applicant has not identified all

sub-awardees by the time of concept note submission, can the applicant add a place holder with a generic sub-awardee name (for example: Youth Focused Community Organization)?

**USAID Response: Yes.**

82. Will USAID allow any variance between the estimated cost summary submitted with the concept note and the detailed budget submitted with the full application? If so, please provide further detail to what level of variance would be allowed.

**USAID Response: Yes, this summary budget may change based on your proposed technical approach.**

83. For the full technical application, can USAID kindly confirm that the cover page and table of contents are not included in the 25-page limit?

**USAID Response: The cover page and the table of contents are included in the 25 page limit.**

84. Would USAID please consider allowing one additional page for Acronyms?

**USAID Response: Acronyms count against the page limitations indicated in the RFA.**

85. For the full technical application, will USAID also allow for a list of acronyms and abbreviations not included in the 25-page limit?

**USAID Response: Acronyms count against the page limitations indicated in the RFA.**

86. In the full application stage, the RFA requests several cost documents from the applicant (e.g. Representations and Certifications, NICRA, etc.). Are these items required from proposed subrecipients, or only from the prime applicant?

**USAID Response: This information is also required for the proposed sub awardees.**

87. The instructions for the full technical application include a requirement of submission of a Performance History “in a separate document from the technical application” which includes a maximum of the Applicant’s five most relevant contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements. The instructions for the full cost application also include a “recent history of performance for all its cost-reimbursement contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs, not to exceed five years.” Performance history is not explicitly included in the list of evaluation criteria in Section E. for either component of the full application.

a. Could USAID kindly clarify whether a history of performance should be included as an attachment to the technical application, or as an integral part of the cost application, or both?

**USAID Response: As indicated in the RFA, the requested information in page 40 should be attached to the technical application and the information listed in page 46 to the cost application.**

b. While the instructions in Section D.3.4 indicate that USAID’s preference is for the technical and cost applications to each be submitted as a consolidated email attachment, as referenced above Section D.3.5 indicates that the history of performance should not be consolidated with the technical application document. Should history of performance be required as part of the technical application, could USAID please clarify whether it should be consolidated into the same pdf document or kept separate?

**USAID Response: As indicated in the RFA, the requested information in page 40 should be attached to the technical application and the information listed in page 46 to the cost application.**

c. Could USAID also kindly confirm whether a maximum of five recent relevant agreements applies, in whichever section the performance history is requested?

**USAID Response: For the concept paper, please follow the instructions listed in page 33. For the full application, please follow the instructions listed in pages 40 and 46.**

d. Finally, the technical and cost application instructions each provide similar but not identical lists of the required information; in either case, can USAID confirm that short form PPRs may be used?

**USAID Response: As indicated in the RFA, the requested information in page 40 should be attached to the technical application and the information listed in page 46 to the cost application.**

88. The RFA indicates in Section D.3.4 for the full application that “USAID’s preference is that the technical application and the cost application each be submitted as consolidated email attachments ... If this is not possible, please provide instructions on how to collate the attachments.”

a. In the event consolidation is not possible, is there a limit on the number of attachments per email?

**USAID Response: No; however, applicants are expected to submit consolidated documents.**

b. In the event consolidation is not possible, will documents formatted in Microsoft Word be acceptable, in addition to pdf and Excel?

**USAID Response: As indicated in the RFA, documents should be submitted in pdf and excel format.**

89. The RFA indicates that applicants should budget equipment and supplies in the same category. In our past experience, USAID has asked that equipment category capture items with unit costs greater than \$5,000 and supplies includes items with a unit value less than \$5,000. Could USAID please confirm whether equipment and supplies should be consolidated into a single budget category?

**USAID Response: yes**

90. Given that there is limited space for budget detail in the concept note, can applicants state that they will provide the required cost share in the short narrative description?

**USAID Response: yes, as long as it does not exceed the page limitation.**

91. Key Personnel: Regarding the phrase "*The concept paper must clearly address the factors outlined in the selection criteria, and must demonstrate technical and managerial capacity to implement the Activity,*" what information, if any, does USAID require about proposed key personnel in the concept note?

**USAID Response: USAID is not requesting specific information of the key personnel for the Concept Papers. Please refer to the instructions listed in pages 33 and 34 of the RFA and the merit review criteria in pag 49.**

92. Full Proposal: Concept notes are due August 16<sup>th</sup> and USAID indicates an anticipated start date of October 2021. What is the estimated due date for full proposals? We would request at least six weeks given the challenges of coordinating with local partners in the remote-pandemic context.  
**USAID Response: USAID expects to request full applications by the end of the FY 2021.**
93. Do you have identified what data you need to be included in the section describing the experience as an institution? As the concept paper is very short  
**USAID Response: Please refer to the instructions included in page 33 of the RFA.**
94. What data do you need to demonstrate the technical and managerial capacity of the organization?  
**USAID Response: Please refer to the instructions included in page 33 of the RFA.**
95. Do you have to register on any page?  
**USAID Response: Not for the concept papers. Organizations invited to submit a full application must refer to the instructions listed in section D.7.**
96. Is it necessary to submit a letter of endorsement from the Ministry of Education of Guatemala?  
**USAID Response: No**

## **Section E – Application Review Information**

97. Does USAID expect partnerships, specifically transitional partners, be established at the concept note stage? Will not having established partnerships with local organizations, including a transitional partner, result in a “Fail” grade for the partnership criteria?  
**USAID Response: Concept papers should include a partnership strategy or plan that incorporates key local partners and alliances, including the potential transition partners.**
98. In the section, Merit Review. Phase 1- concept Paper, page 49, the RFA states “USAID will use a streamlined process to evaluate the concept papers. The concept papers will be evaluated using the following three selection criteria: Technical approach, Partnerships, Past experience”  
Question: Can USAID share a more detailed description of the selection/evaluation criteria for entrance to Phase 2 Full Application?  
**USAID Response: Full applications will be evaluated using the criteria listed in page 50 of the RFA.**
99. Question: Can USAID please indicate if each of the three selection/evaluation criteria will be given equal weight or otherwise?  
**USAID Response: The three criteria listed for the concept papers will be given equal weight.**
100. Could USAID kindly provide more information about how the concept papers will be reviewed/ evaluated? Page 32 mentions that USAID may invite one or more of the applicants

with the highest rated concept papers to submit a full application, but page 49 states that each of the three criteria on the concept papers will be evaluated using a pass/fail rating.

**USAID Response: USAID will use a streamline process to evaluate the concept papers and will use the criteria listed in page 49. Only applicants selected in phase 1 will be invited to submit a full application.**

## **Section F – Federal Award Administration Information**

101. Annual Work Plan (p53-54) - Submission and timelines: After the submission of the Strategic Work Plan, “the recipient must submit annual work plans by May 1st” (p53) . Does this mean that the recipient's period of performance will be planned from June to May in any given year?

**USAID Response: This information is being corrected, subsequent annual work plans should be submitted by July 31st of each year.**

102. Annual Work Plan (p53-54) - Target setting: The recipient must “work collaboratively with the AOR to set annual activity targets...informed by existing and activity baseline data that should be available within 30 days of activity start-up” (p53-54), however, the NOFO requires that “an initial task within the first four months of the Activity will be to conduct a foundational skills landscape assessment” (p15).

**USAID Response: The initial task requested may be conducted at the same time that annual activity targets are being set. The initial targets could be based on the applicant’s past experience or other similar educational projects. The landscape will confirm the targets set.**

103. Can target setting be informed by the foundational skills landscape assessment? If so, will target setting be done when the foundational skills landscape assessment results are available?

**USAID Response: There could be an initial set of targets presented that could be confirmed when the foundational skills landscape assessment’s results are available.**

104. Strategic evaluation and learning agenda (p54) - As “USAID intends to separately procure an independent impact evaluation”, is there any baseline consideration the Recipient must take into account?

**USAID Response: The RFA states that “USAID may intend to separately procure an independent impact evaluation.” Therefore, the applicant should coordinate closely at the beginning of the award/baseline on whether there will be an impact evaluation and what considerations should be taken into account.**

105. Quarterly Performance Reports and Annual Performance Reports (p59) - The NOFO states that the “report from the last quarterly (October 30) will be combined with the Annual Report described above”. However, an Annual Report is not referenced in previous sections. Could you please confirm that the NOFO is referring to the Annual Performance Report described below, on page 59?

**USAID Response: yes**

106. Could you please confirm the submission date for the Annual Performance Report (October 30 and 31 are mentioned as submission dates in pages p59-61)?

**USAID Response: The correct date is October 30, this information is being corrected.**

## **Annexes**

107. **Annex 3 Climate Risk Management (p3,7)** - The NOFO states in two separate sections that “there is an opportunity to educate youth on national pressing environmental concerns and to provide environmental considerations awareness and safety and security measures to be taken when extreme weather occurs”, however there are no references to these activities in the Program Description section.- Could you please clarify whether the recipient must include these references as part of the proposed activities?

**USAID Response: Applicants may determine whether this is an intervention to be pursued, and if so, applicants may propose their own solutions and approaches for implementing this intervention.**